

Message Text

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PAGE 01 PRAGUE 00915 101348Z
ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 NEA-10 IO-13 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05
H-01 INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 SP-02
SS-15 ICA-11 OMB-01 MCT-01 ACDA-12 MCE-00 EB-08
/111 W

-----069770 102227Z /73

R 071500Z APR 78
FM AMEMBASSY PRAGUE
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5112
AMEMBASSY BEIRUT
AMEMBASSY BUCHAREST
AMEMBASSY BERLIN
AMEMBASSY BUDAPEST
AMEMBASSY CAIRO
AMEMBASSY DAMASUCS
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV
AMEMBASSY WARSAW
USMISSION USUN NEW YORK
USMISSION USNATO

C O N F I D E N T I A L PRAGUE 0915

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: XF, CZ
SUBJECT: CZECHOSLOVAK SUPPORT FOR PLO

REF PRAGUE 0716

1. SUMMARY: IN THE WAKE OF VISIT TO PRAGUE OF PLO
POLITICAL DEPARTMENT CHIEF FAROUK KADDOUMI MARCH 15-17,
(REFTTEL) WE HAVE SPOKE TO SEVERAL PERSONS WHO HAD PARTIAL KNOWLEDGE
OF THE VISIT. THEIR COMMENTS SUGGEST PLO IS RECEIVING STRONGER SUPPORT

FROM PRAGUE AND POSSIBLY FROM MOSCOW THAN IN THE PAST.
END SUMMARY.

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2. AFP REPORTER SOUGHT OUT KADDOUMI'S DEPUTY (ASSIGNED TO PLO
OFFICE IN PARIS) WHO TOLD HIM THAT ARAFAT HAD OBTAINED
"MATERIAL, DIPLOMATIC AND POLITICAL" SUPPORT DURING HIS
EARLY MARCH VISIT TTO MOSCOW. AFP REP INTERPRETED THIS TO
MEAN ARMS OR THE PROMISE OF ARMS.

3. EGYPTIAN CHARGE RIZK TOLD DCM THAT KADDOUMI "DEFINITELY" WAS IN PRAGUE TO SEEK ARMS. RIZK BELIEVED CZECHOSLOVAKS WOULD, IN FACT, SUPPLY WEAPONS TO THE PALESTINIANS, BUT HE EMPHASIZED THAT SUCH ARMS--FOR GUERILLA WARFARE--WOULD BE NO MATCH FOR ISRAEL'S MODERN ARMS, "ESPECIALLY THE F-16."

4. SYRIAN EMBASSY OFFICIAL POINTED OUT THAT CZECHOSLOVAKS RECEIVED KADDOUMI WITH HONORS HITHERTO EXTENDED ONLY TO ARAFAT. UPON ARRIVAL, KADDOUMI WAS GREETED NOT AONLY BY A REPRESENTATIVE OF THE AFRO-ASIAN SOLIDARITY COMMITTEE, WHICH HAS BEEN NORMAL PRACTICE, BUT BY ZDENKO CHEBEN, DEPUTY HEAD OF THE CPCZ CC INTERNATIONAL POLICY DEPARTMENT, AND BY MILOS VOJTA, DEPUTY MINISTER OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS. NOTABLY, KADDOUMI OBTAINED AUDIENCES WITH PARTY IDEOLOGIST AND FOREIGN AFFAIRS EXPERT VASIL BILAK (WHO, ACCORDING TO SYRIAN, HAD PREVIOUSLY MET ONLY WITH ARAFAT HIMSELF) AND WITH FONMIN CHNOUPEK. SYRIAN EMBASSY WAS SITE OF RECEPTION FOR KADDOUMI ORGANIZED BY AMBASSADORS OF REJECTIONIST ARAB STATES.

5. COMMENT: WE CANNOT CONFIRM WHAT KADDOUMI HAS GAINED MATERIALLY FROM PRAGUE VISIT, THOUGH IT WOULD APPEAR THAT HE MAY HAVE RECEIVED PLEDGES OF SMALL ARMS AID. ON THE OTHER HAND, POLITICAL RELATIONS BETWEEN PLO AND CPCZ HAVE CLEARLY WAXED "CORDIAL AND FRIENDLY", IN THE WORDS OF RUDE PRAVO.
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